

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 659 (Delegate Frush, *et al.*)
 Appropriations

University of Maryland, College Park - Campus Traffic Study

This bill requires the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) to conduct a comprehensive study of vehicular traffic on the UMCP campus and make recommendations that will enable UMCP to eliminate or reduce vehicular traffic on campus. During deliberations, public hearings must be held and ample opportunity for public input must be provided. A final report must be submitted by January 15, 2007. The Maryland Department of Transportation and Prince George’s County may not spend any funds or grant any approvals for right-of-way acquisition for, or the design or construction of, the proposed Campus Connector until the final report is submitted.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2006 and terminates June 30, 2007.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Higher education expenditures could increase by an estimated \$300,000 in FY 2007 to fund a comprehensive study of vehicular traffic on the UMCP campus. Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures could decrease by up to \$451,000 in FY 2007 if a proposed appropriation for planning of the Campus Connector cannot be expended during the year. Revenues would not be affected.

| (in dollars) | FY 2007 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 | FY 2010 | FY 2011 |
|----------------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Revenues | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| SF Expenditure | (-) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Higher Ed Exp. | 300,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net Effect | (\$300,000) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: Any funding Prince George’s County plans to expend in FY 2007 for planning of the Campus Connector could be reduced if planning is delayed.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Language in the 2005 *Joint Chairmen's Report* (JCR) required the State Highway Administration (SHA) to submit a report detailing stakeholder concerns that were initially outlined in a study of the Campus Connector done in response to a 2004 JCR requirement. The 2005 JCR response was due December 1, 2005. There are currently no restrictions on funding for the proposed project.

Background: The 2004 JCR required SHA to submit a report by July 30, 2004 on the actions it has taken to address issues relating to the Campus Connector. To fulfill the requirement, SHA hired RESOLVE, Inc. to prepare a report on stakeholder concerns. An interim report was submitted by SHA on July 30, 2004, and the final report, prepared by RESOLVE, was submitted December 23, 2004. RESOLVE concluded that "stakeholders are polarized on the need, desirability, and preferred alignment of a connector road." The report recommends exploring all of the alternatives for relieving traffic congestion in a way "that balances College Park's regional and local commitments."

The 2005 JCR then required SHA to prepare an additional report to address some of the concerns raised by the RESOLVE report. That JCR response summarized 11 Campus Connector reports that are underway or were recently completed. The response notes that "the findings of the previous studies indicate a need for additional capacity in order to address future transportation needs in the area."

State Expenditures: Higher education expenditures would increase by an estimated \$300,000 in fiscal 2007 to contract for an in-depth study of vehicular traffic on the campus, including a traffic analysis, an assessment of transportation alternatives, and public outreach.

The proposed fiscal 2007 Consolidated Transportation Program includes \$451,000 in TTF expenditures for planning the Campus Connector. This funding could not be expended until after the study required by the bill is complete. The study is due January 15, 2007, more than six months into fiscal 2007. This could reduce the expenditures that have been included in the budget. In fiscal 2006, \$421,000 was included in the budget for planning of the project but only \$50,000 is expected to be spent due in part to restrictions placed on the funds through budget bill language that prohibited expenditure of the funds until 45 days after the 2005 JCR response was submitted to the budget committees (*i.e.*, mid-January 2006). This bill could result in a similar reduction in fiscal 2007.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: A similar bill was introduced last year as HB 1278 but was withdrawn.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): University System of Maryland, Department of Legislative Services

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nas/rhh

Analysis by: Mark W. Collins

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510